R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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OPERATION P.R.I.M.A. - RECLAIM.
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NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION, BROOKLYN, N.Y.
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THIS PROJECT RECRUITED TEACHERS OF PUERTO RICAN EXTRACTION IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF SCHOOL STAFFS, TO PROVIDE NEW INSIGHTS AND APPROACHES TO EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS, AND TO GIVE PUERTO RICAN CHILDREN THE BENEFIT OF ASSOCIATION WITH TEACHERS OF SIMILAR BACKGROUND. THREE HUNDRED APPLICANTS RESPONDED TO AN INITIAL RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN, HANDLED THROUGH NEWSPAPERS, 1/2-HOUR PROGRAMS ON SPANISH LANGUAGE RADIO AND TV, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF PUERTO RICAN COMMUNITY AGENCIES. THOSE WHO LACKED A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE WERE IN MANY CASES PLACED AS SCHOOL SECRETARIES, PAROCHIAL SCHOOL TEACHERS, AND COMMUNITY DAY CENTER WORKERS. THE CENTER FOR URBAN EDUCATION (CUE), A REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, PROVIDED FUNDS TO ENABLE DEGREE HOLDERS WITH INADEQUATE ENGLISH TO STUDY SPEECH AND COMPOSITION AT LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY. CUE AND THE BOARD OF EDUCATION JOINED IN UNDERWRITING TUITION AT FOUR UNIVERSITIES FOR CANDIDATES LACKING SPECIFIC EDUCATION COURSES. OF THE 108 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS, 69 BECAME ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS. NINE ARE TEACHING, AND THE OTHERS ARE AT VARIOUS STAGES OF PREPARATION, HELPED BY COUNSELING BY THE P.R.I.M.A. STAFF. (PP)

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Board of Education of the City of New York
141 Livingston St., Brooklyn, N. Y. 11201

1967

Mr. Raymond Greenstein, Director
Dr. Moises Tirado, Assistant Director

OPERATION P.R.I.M.A.

I OBJECTIVES

P.R.I.M.A. recruits teachers of Puerto Rican extraction with the idea in mind of bringing new insights, understanding and approaches in the solution of our educational problems. There are 211,000 Puerto Rican children enrolled in our public schools who would benefit from association with teachers of similar ethnic background.

The Board of Education is also looking forward toward improving the ethnic composition of its staff so that it more favorably reflects that of the population of our city.

II RECRUITMENT

To meet our objectives, an intensive recruitment campaign was launched to discover qualified Puerto Rican teachers who, for one reason or another, might be underemployed or misemployed and unaware of the possibilities of a teaching career with the New York City Board of Education. Representatives of Puerto Rican community agencies who also served on the Advisory Committee of P.R.I.M.A. were quick to offer their cooperation in publicizing the program through the communities. In addition, the mass media of communication generously serviced our recruitment campaign through detailed articles as well as half-hour programs on T.V. and radio.

III PROCEDURE FOLLOWED IN SELECTING PARTICIPANTS:

Applicants are required to have a college degree and enough

courses in education to be able to fulfill requirements for a specific license. Their applications are screened thoroughly and their transcripts are evaluated by the Board of Examiners. After they are interviewed they are required to develop a topic in English. The idea is to evaluate command of the language.

IV DISPOSITION OF CANDIDATES

Over three hundred applicants have been screened. Unfortunately, a high percentage are not qualified in terms of possessing a Baccalaureate degree. However, a strong by-product in our operation has been a kind of vocational guidance aspect. Many of those who are unqualified are guided into preparing for the substitute school secretary license; others are placed with agencies where bi-lingualism is a strong asset; viz, community day care centers, responsive environment project (talking typewriter), parochial schools, etc.

Candidates who are eligible and who have difficulties in expressing themselves in English are required to undertake some training in oral and written English. This coaching, provided by P.R.I.M.A. free of charge, is given at Long Island University during two evenings each week. The instructors are experts in the field of speech and composition.

Candidates who need one or two courses in education to fulfill requirements for a specific license are advised to take these courses, free of charge, at a local college. Yeshiva University, Fordham, Long Island and Bank Street College have been cooperating with the Board of Education in this respect. The Center for Urban Education has been

responsible for obtaining funds to provide wholly for instruction in oral and written English and partially for the college tuition costs. The Board of Education of the City of New York has contributed to the program the cost of director, associate director and the remainder of tuition costs for college.

After a short period of training, participants are informed about examinations announced by the Board of Education and advised to file for them.

Those who pass the examination are offered a teaching position.

V. PRESENT STATUS OF P.R.I.M.A.

108 eligibles

42 have not participated because

5 had no transcripts

5 no education courses

4 not locatable

28 unable to continue with program

69 have participated as follows:

11 involved in college courses subsidized by P.R.I.M.A.

23 involved in college courses plus courses in oral and written English

4 involved in oral and written English courses only

21 can not participate in courses but are engaged in taking examinations or waiting to take examinations for Board of Education license

10 are presently teaching or waiting for appointment

4 elementary school teachers

2 Sub. Auxiliary Teachers in the elementary schools

1 Jr. High School (Spanish)

1 Sr. High School (English)

1 Attendance teacher

In many instances, timidity resulting from a feeling of being a stranger in a strange land and difficulties with English tend to restrain individuals from filing for examinations. In these cases strong, close personal support provided by the operating staff of P.R.I.M.A. has helped to overcome diffidence.